UNITED NATIONS **S**

Security Council

Distr.
GENERAL

S/1998/1128
30 November 1998
ENGLISH
ORIGINAL: ARABIC

LETTER DATED 29 NOVEMBER 1998 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF IRAQ TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

Upon instructions from my Government, I should like to attach the following letters:

1. Letter dated 26 November 1998 from the Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs of Iraq, Mr. Riyadh al-Qaysi, to the Executive Chairman of the Special Commission, Mr. Richard Butler, requesting the Commission to send teams of experts to carry out work relevant to the work programme agreed upon between the United Nations Special Commission (UNSCOM) and the Iraqi side on 14 July 1998;

2. Letter dated 27 November 1998 from the Executive Chairman of the Special Commission to Mr. Tariq Aziz, Deputy Foreign Minister of the Iraqi Government, answering the above-mentioned letter from Mr. Riyadh al-Qaysi;

3. Reply from Mr. Riyadh al-Qaysi dated 29 November 1998 to the letter from the Executive Chairman of the Special Commission dated 27 November 1998.

Since we believe it is important for the Security Council to be informed of the positions of Iraq expressed in this exchange of letters, I attach herewith copies of these letters, requesting them to be brought to the attention of the members of the Council.

Accept, Sir, the assurances of my highest consideration.

(Signed) Nizar HAMDOON
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

Annex I

[Original: English]

Letter dated 26 November 1998 from the Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs of Iraq addressed to the Executive Chairman of the Special Commission established by the Secretary-General pursuant to paragraph 9 (b) (i) of Security Council resolution 687 (1991)

Pursuant to the schedule for work of 14 July 1998, I should like to request that:

1. A team from UNSCOM be sent to assist their Iraqi counterparts in investigating the fate of the 155-mm shells filled with mustard.

2. A team from UNSCOM be sent to verify the tail units of the R-400.

3. A team from UNSCOM be entrusted with the task of looking with their Iraqi counterparts at the precise location of the pits which were used for the field storage of the special warheads at Fallujah Forest and the Tigris canal.

I hope that these tasks will be finalized as soon as possible.

(Signed) Riyadh AL-QAYSI

Annex II

[Original: English]

Letter dated 27 November 1998 from the Executive Chairman of the Special Commission established by the Secretary-General pursuant to paragraph 9 (b) (i) of Security Council resolution 687 (1991) addressed to the Deputy Prime Minister of Iraq

With reference to the letter of 26 November 1998 addressed to me by Mr. Riyadh al-Qaysi, Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs of Iraq, I should like to respond to the proposals that I send three United Nations Special Commission (UNSCOM) inspection teams to Iraq.

We note with satisfaction that the Iraqi side is ready to cooperate with the Special Commission on several specific issues referred to in the Schedule for Work of 14 June 1998. As you are aware, the Commission has already proposed, and was ready to conduct, at the beginning of August 1998, the missions now requested by Iraq. It is for this reason that the Commission had kept the necessary technical resources at the Baghdad Monitoring and Verification Centre for a period of two months, that is, until October 1998.

Concerning the specific proposals contained in Mr. Riyadh al-Qaysi's letter, I should like to state the following:

1. With respect to the request that a team from UNSCOM assist in investigating the disposition of 155-mm shells filled with mustard, the Commission is ready to assist the Iraqi side with its search. To accomplish this effectively, we need to receive Iraq's clarifications on what specific support Iraq seeks from the Commission. As was mentioned in the Schedule for Work, "Iraq will give UNSCOM two weeks advance notice in case it would request deployment by UNSCOM of survey and verification equipment". If Iraq were to request ground-penetrating radar technology, we would need information on the possible locations to be examined and the size of those locations. This would enable the Commission to dispatch to Iraq the necessary resources and equipment. The Commission would also like to receive, in advance, records of all investigations referred to in the letter of 25 November 1998 from Mr. Riyadh al-Qaysi (S/1998/1125, annex). Such records would then be translated so that the discussions could be most productive. To date, the Commission has received only one such report. The procedures suggested would enable this work to be carried out as quickly as possible.

2. With respect to the request that a team from UNSCOM be sent to verify the accounting of tail units for R-400 aerial bombs, the Commission is preparing a mission which would be tasked to verify Iraq's declaration on the accounting for R-400 aerial bombs, including their tail sections. This mission will be sent to Iraq as soon as is practically possible.

3. With respect to the third request concerning the location of the pits which were used for the storage of special warheads, we intend to task the missile monitoring group now stationed at the Baghdad Monitoring and

Verification Centre to carry out this mission in cooperation with their Iraqi counterparts.

It is evident that the preparation and implementation of these missions will take a certain amount of time. So that there will be no misunderstanding between us, I wish to state that it is not my intention that the implementation of these joint tasks should impact on the Commission's responsibility to report to the Secretary-General in accordance with the statement to the press by the President of the Council on 15 November. As I informed the Council during its informal consultations on 24 November, I expect to be in a position to formulate a report in two or three weeks time on whether or not Iraq has returned to full cooperation. This should be sufficient time to proceed with the full spectrum of our work.

(Signed) Richard BUTLER

Annex III

[Original: English]

Letter dated 29 November 1998 from the Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs of Iraq addressed to the Executive Chairman of the Special Commission established by the Secretary-General pursuant to paragraph 9 (b) (i) of Security Council resolution 687 (1991)

With reference to your letter dated 27 November 1998 addressed to Mr. Tariq Aziz, Deputy Prime Minister of the Republic of Iraq, I should like to note first that the tasks of the missions requested by Iraq to be conducted jointly with teams from UNSCOM, as indicated in my letter dated 26 November, are, from our point of view, not related substantively to disarmament tasks but to issues which could be addressed through joint work with UNSCOM to gain further clarifications when needed. Seen in this light, these issues could not prevent a final determination that the disarmament phase has already been accomplished. The pursuance of these issues could, if need be, very well be continued during the monitoring phase.

As regards the specific points stated in your above-mentioned letter, I should like to respond in accordance with the sequence mentioned therein.

1. We need the deployment by UNSCOM of survey and detection equipment, including ground-penetrating radar and a chemical agent monitoring detector. The locations of work are:

(a) The site where expired munitions are normally destroyed inside the fenced area of the munitions storage at al-Aukhaider. This site is composed of four areas, tw of which are approximately 50 by 50 metres. The two others are approximately 25 by 25 metres. The nature of the soil is flat sedimentary.

(b) The burning area of the trailer-truck near Khan al-Ruba'a along the road of Karbala-Najaf. The approximate dimensions of the area are 150 by 40 metres. The nature of the soil is sandy.

(c) And, possibly, the site where expired munitions are normally destroyed outside the fenced area of the munitions storage at al-Aukhaider, called al-Kusseer. The approximate dimensions of this site is 2 by 2 kilometres. This site contains pits with a 10 to 15 metres radius. The nature of the soil is sedimentary and undulating.

It is anticipated that the required work will take from 7 to 10 days.

It is to be noted that all these sites were visited by UNSCOM-248 on 30 July 1998.

As for the records of all investigations referred to in my letter of 25 November, I should like to recall that our investigations were internal and the briefings thereon, which were presented to the competent authorities, were

oral and showed no conclusive conclusion as regards the fate of the munitions in question. All relevant facts related to our latest efforts were included in the report of Maj. Gen. Muhammed Shakir, a copy of which was handed over to UNSCOM-248 in July 1998. It is necessary to point out in this connection that the most important step to be taken is the actual work on the ground, which we hope will commence as soon as possible.

In addition, as I pointed out in my letter, this issue is important to the internal security of Iraq, and it is this reason that prompted the Iraqi competent authorities to undertake its efforts to resolve it even before it had been raised by UNSCOM.

2. We understand that what remained of the task related to the R-400 comprises simply the accounting of the tail units of these bombs, which are at the stores of the Iraqi Air Force. We hope that this task will be completed in a very short period.

3. We hope that you will issue immediate instructions to the Baghdad Monitoring and Verification Centre to carry out the task mentioned in paragraph 3 of your letter. We stand ready to commence our joint work with the Baghdad Monitoring and Verification Centre immediately.

I should also like to inform you that the document related to the armament of Missile Unit 223, comprising 65 pages, was transmitted today by the National Monitoring Directorate to the Acting Director of the Baghdad Monitoring and Verification Centre under cover of a letter dated 29 November 1998.

Incidentally, I have been noticing your numerous statements that you need two to three weeks to be in a position to formulate a report on whether Iraq has returned to full cooperation. Since those statements were made on different dates, I wonder what commencement date for the said period you have in mind, especially in view of the fact that we adopted our decision to resume cooperation with UNSCOM on 14 November 1998.

(Signed) Riyadh AL-QAYSI